

# PRESS RELEASE

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## For Immediate Release

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Assistant U.S. Attorney

Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Aaron Ellringer, 35, of Eau Claire, Wis., was sentenced yesterday in U.S. District Court in Madison by U.S. Magistrate Judge Stephen L. Crocker to four days in the Chippewa County Jail beginning February 6, 2009. Ellringer previously pleaded guilty to a charge that he trespassed at a U.S. Forest Service facility in Rhineland, Wis., on July 20, 2000.

Ellringer had been charged with conspiring to damage government property and damaging government property, along with Katherine Christianson, 27, of Sante Fe, N.M., and Bryan Rivera, a/k/a Brian Lefey, 31, of Olympia, Wash. In return for his guilty plea to the trespass charge, and his cooperation in the prosecution of Christianson and Rivera, and in recognition of his limited role in the crime, the government dismissed the felony charges pending against Ellringer.

In sentencing Ellringer, Magistrate Judge Crocker stated his belief that a period of incarceration was required because, while Ellringer's only involvement was as a driver for other co-conspirators, "terrible things resulted" from the destruction at the Forest Service facility.

Christianson and Rivera have previously pleaded guilty and Rivera will be sentenced on February 10, 2009 and Christianson on February 19, 2009.

United States Attorney Peterson stated that yesterday's sentencing was the result of an investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the U.S. Forest Service. Prosecution of this case has been handled Assistant U.S. Attorney Meredith P. Duchemin.

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